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# DISCOURSE

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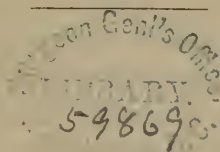
MAY 27, 1830,

AT THE OPENING OF THE

**Vermont Classical Seminary.**

BY WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE,

PASTOR OF THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN ALBANY.



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## DISCOURSE.

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I. COR. X. 31.

WHATSOEVER YE DO, DO ALL TO THE GLORY OF GOD.

THIS inspired precept furnishes a rule of living that is of universal application. It applies to men of every class, and to the conduct of men in every relation. No man can be so high, no man can be so low, but that this precept reaches him in all its divine authority. To the king on his throne, to the minister at the altar, to the parent in his family, to the teacher in his school, to the merchant in his counting room, to the mechanic in his workshop; to all of every condition and character, it addresses itself without distinction. It proposes to eradicate the native selfishness of the heart; to bring man to act from a principle which is alone worthy of his origin as a creature of God, and worthy of his destination as a creature of immortality.

The glory of God is the manifestation of his perfections; and as it is the ultimate end of all his works, so it ought to be the ultimate end of all our actions. This end we are to attain by conforming our actions to his law, which is a transcript of his moral character; and thus reflecting in our own character the image of his.

The general precept contained in the text, requiring that all our actions should be dictated by a supreme regard to the glory of God, I purpose, in the present discourse, to accommodate to the occasion on which we are assembled. I shall consider it as addressed especially to those who are charged with the education of youth, and in a general sense, to the whole community in relation to this subject; requiring that, in this deeply interesting department of action, they should be governed by the great christian principle of doing all to the glory of God. With this application of the text, I shall call your attention, first, to THE END WHICH OUGHT TO BE KEPT IN VIEW IN EDUCATING YOUTH; and secondly, to THE MEANS BY WHICH THAT END MAY BE MOST SUCCESSFULLY ATTAINED.

I. The END at which we ought to aim in the education of youth is twofold: it is *to enable them to do the most good, and to enjoy the most good.*

It is obvious, upon the least reflection, that the author of our being had reference to this double end in our creation. That we are made for action, and for benevolent action, is manifest from the very constitution of our nature; for it were impossible that God should have given us the noble faculties we possess, if he had not designed that they should be employed; and the only way in which they can be legitimately employed is in doing good. He has intimated the same purpose in respect to us by having set before us the most powerful motives to benevolent action, and by having placed us in circumstances every way favorable to it. Moreover, he has taught us that to do good is the perfection of his own nature; the exercise in which he especially delights: hence he



cannot but delight in the same exercise in his creatures; and this must have been an important end in their creation.

But man was not only designed by his Creator to do good, but also to enjoy good. This is also proved by a reference to the constitution of our nature; for benevolent action and happiness sustain to each other in human experience the relation of cause and effect. And besides, all the means of enjoyment which God has prescribed for us in his word, are connected with doing good; and it is every where implied that the measure of good we accomplish, will, on the whole, be the measure of good we enjoy. As we are endowed with faculties which qualify us for action, so we are endowed with susceptibilities of enjoyment; and it is manifest that the Creator designed that we should glorify him in both parts of our nature. I hardly need say that I here speak of man, both as it respects action and enjoyment, as an immortal creature; and consider the design of God concerning him as relating to the whole period of his existence.

You hence perceive that, while happiness is with every person a legitimate object of pursuit, it is so only in the way of doing good. There are many who make happiness an ultimate end without any respect to duty: the true order is, to be faithful in the discharge of duty, and look for happiness only in its train. He who adopts any other course, is sure to defeat his object, and ultimately to reap a harvest of misery. Even the redeemed in glory find their happiness not in indolence, but in action; and their supreme object is to serve and glorify their Redeemer.

Now, if such be the object for which man was created, viz. that he might do all the good and enjoy all the good of which he is capable during his whole existence, surely it is his duty to co-operate with the Creator in the accomplishment of his design. Every individual should do this in respect to himself, and so far as he can, in respect to others also. This especially should be the object constantly kept in view in the education of youth ; not only on the general principle that we are bound in all our conduct to fall in with the designs of providence so far as they are made known to us, but because youth is the forming period of the character, and the influence which is exerted then, whether for good or evil, is usually far more decisive than at any subsequent period. It should be the object of every institution designed for the education of youth, and of every individual according to the measure of his influence in this important sphere of action, to mould the character in such a manner as to secure the greatest possible amount of good both in the way of action and enjoyment ; not in this life only, but through eternity. It is lamentably true that education has too often had respect to enjoyment only, and not to action ; to this life only, and not to another ; but it must regard both action and enjoyment, time and eternity, or the proper end of it cannot be answered.

II. If such be the end which ought to be kept in view in the education of youth, we will consider, secondly, the MEANS by which it is to be attained : in other words, we will notice some of the leading characteristics of a system of education which will secure the advantages of which we have spoken.

1. Such a system *contemplates the culture of the intellect in ALL its powers.*

Notwithstanding the mind of man, according to all correct philosophy, is a simple and indivisible substance, it is capable of different modes of operation ; in other words, it possesses various faculties, as perception, judgment, memory, &c. Now each of these faculties has its distinct office ; — an office which is performed only in proportion as it is brought successfully into operation. The reasoning faculty, for instance, is evidently designed for a most important purpose ; but if it be not trained by a course of judicious exercise, if it be given up entirely to the guidance of accidental circumstances, that purpose can be answered, to say the least, but in a very inferior degree. The same is true of the imagination—if subjected to a proper discipline, it is capable of operating with sublime effect ; but let the proper culture be withheld, and the consequence will be, either that its fires will never kindle, or else they will burn only with a bewildering and malignant brightness. And so it is of every other faculty : just in proportion as it is suffered to remain dormant, or as it is turned out of its proper direction by improper discipline, the end for which it is designed is defeated : there is just so much to be deducted from the amount, both of action and enjoyment, of which the soul is susceptible.

But the importance of the culture of *all* the powers of the mind appears not only from the fact that where any one faculty is neglected there is so much clear loss, but also from the consideration that the different faculties exert a reciprocal influence upon each other.

There is a mutual dependence between the memory, the imagination, the judgment, the reasoning faculty, in short between all the powers of the mind ; each one borrowing from all the rest, and all like the parts of a well-adjusted machine, operating most legitimately and most effectually, where the balance is carefully preserved. The cultivation of one faculty, to the neglect of the rest, destroys the original harmony of the mind ; it is a manifest departure from the design of the Creator ; and that system of education of which this is a feature, can secure but very imperfectly the object which education is designed to answer.

2. But notwithstanding the importance of a due regard to *all* the powers of the intellect in the business of education, I observe, secondly, that *this matter should be conducted with suitable reference to the variety which children exhibit, of intellectual constitution.*

It admits of no question that there is in this respect an original diversity ; that while some minds are on the whole more gifted than others, some also more than others are gifted in respect to particular faculties. In some, for instance, the reasoning faculty is originally the strongest ; in others, the imagination ; in others, the judgment : while, on the other hand, there are individuals in whom some faculties would seem originally to have a feeble and almost a dubious existence. Now, whether it be that one faculty stands out with commanding prominence before the rest, or whether it be that in one faculty the mind is comparatively deficient, either case deserves to be

carefully considered in the affair of education. In the latter case, it is obviously proper that so much attention should be paid to the culture of that faculty which possesses the least degree of strength, that the mind shall attain a fair and just proportion ; while, on the other hand, it is equally clear that the intellect should be trained to put forth its most commanding efforts by means of some of its stronger powers. In the former case, that is, where one faculty greatly takes the precedence in strength and vigor of the others, though there is here no reason for neglecting the cultivation of any, there surely is a reason why this should be cultivated with special care ; because here lies the highest capability of the mind : into this particular power the Almighty Creator has thrown, if I may be allowed the expression, more of his own energy than into any other. And he has hereby intimated, in a general manner at least, his will, in respect to the particular direction which the mind shall receive, and even the employment to which it shall be devoted.

It hence appears that it is a matter of fundamental importance in the education of youth, to ascertain, as early as possible, the character of their minds ; that the discipline to which they are subjected may not be adopted at random, but may be suited to their particular constitution. In many respects indeed, the course of intellectual discipline, especially in its early stages, must be substantially the same ; but a mind accustomed to close attention and accurate discernment, will soon discover on the one hand which of the mental powers of a child are most susceptible of cultivation ; and on the other, which of them need



most to be strengthened, that the intellectual character may not be deformed through the want of goodly proportions. How obvious is it that the mind of Locke was wonderfully fitted for deep research into the mysteries of the human understanding ; and how much he accomplished in this department of intellectual labor, none need be told : but had Locke with the same powers which he possessed, attempted to be a poet, he would probably have long since been forgotten, or would have been remembered only for having attempted what he knew not how to perform. Milton wrote a treatise on theology ; and had he done nothing more, he would have been known only as having erected one of the most stupendous fabrics of absurdity which the world has seen. But happily he wrote poetry also ; and here he was at home : this was the element in which his soul could most freely breathe ; an employment for which his bold and lofty imagination especially fitted him. And hence the glory that hangs around his name at this day ; a glory that will brighten rather than fade with the lapse of coming ages. And so it is in innumerable other cases—An individual may accomplish much in one department of action, who can accomplish little or nothing in another ; the actual amount of his success depending in no small degree on the adaptation of his powers to the object on which they are employed. Let this important truth then always be kept in view by those who are entrusted with the education of youth. Let it be an object with them to discover not only the general, but the particular capabilities of the youthful mind. And this point once settled, let them, while they take care not to neglect the culture of any

faculty, direct their main efforts to the developement of those powers which exist in the highest perfection ; in other words, let them train the mind in such a manner that it shall act with all the energy and advantage of which it is capable.

3. A system of education, to answer the end which ought to be kept in view, *should unite the double object of particular and general utility* : that is, the various branches which are pursued should be such as may be turned to some practical use, while they minister to the general culture of the mind, and give it the command of its own powers.

It were altogether too contracted a view of education, to regard it merely with reference to the amount of acquisition which it secures, independently of the discipline to which it subjects the intellectual faculties. A far nobler and more interesting view is that which regards it as the training of the mind ; as a system of effort designed to bring out its powers, and carry it forward from one degree of strength to another. What though a youth should have acquired ever so much knowledge ; if he has not, along with it, acquired the easy command of his faculties, and if every new degree of it has not been with him a new degree of intellectual power, rely on it, he does not reap the legitimate fruit of his mental toil. That this important end of education may be gained, it is essential that, in every branch of study, the mind should be directed to the spirit, rather than the letter ; that it should be encouraged to think its own thoughts, and even to presume that the text book itself, where it is any thing else than the Bible, *may* be wrong. Not that I

would encourage a habit of intellectual presumption in youth—nothing is more disgusting than to see a stripling who has scarcely advanced beyond the threshold of the temple of science, pertly questioning established authorities, and with an air of self conceit, obtruding his own crude or novel speculations: but this is one thing; and that independence of mind which asks for a reason for whatever it assents to, and which modestly pushes its inquiries beyond authority, or even in the face of authority, is quite another. Let those to whom the office of educating youth is entrusted, encourage this habit of modest inquisitiveness as much as they may, only let them take care that it does not degenerate into a habit of intellectual vanity and self confidence; and instead of having occasion to apprehend any unfavorable result, they will find it the most efficient means of giving to the mind a knowledge of its own powers on the one hand, and the use and command of its powers on the other.

Let me here say a word in regard to the use and the abuse of text books. That they furnish important facilities, when properly employed, both to the teacher and the pupil, there can be no doubt; and there is as little question that they are capable of being perverted as auxiliaries to mental inaction. The true use to be made of them is, not to supersede but to assist reflection; not merely to communicate information, but to give an impulse to the intellect, by suggesting hints and principles which it may follow out to their legitimate results. But has it not too often been the fact, that while the memory of the student has been laid under rigid contribution to



gather up whatever is said in the text book, the other faculties have found a ready dispensation; and has not this lazy habit of study too often been encouraged by an equally lazy habit of instruction—that of confining the recitation to the very letter of the author which has been the subject of it. In order to guard against this evil, when the subject is of such a nature as to admit of it, let the text book be regarded only as the basis of the instruction to be communicated; and let the teacher conduct his pupils into other fields of thought than those which the author has directly opened; and let him encourage them to scrutinize every principle, and seek for a solution of every difficulty that may present itself. Such a use of text books, while it will not expose the mind to be enslaved by authorities, or leave any of its faculties to rust through inaction, will secure every positive advantage which a record of the labors of other minds can impart.

But while the general culture of the mind should constantly be kept in view in a system of education, each particular branch that is pursued should be of practical utility. It cannot be denied that the intellectual labors of many of the schoolmen, previous to the revival of learning in Europe, were of great extent, and were calculated to produce a high degree of mental acumen. But who that has looked at all into their writings, does not know that the subjects upon which they employed their faculties, were usually of little practical moment; and that they would often pour out a world of learned nonsense to establish a point which after all was not worth establishing? And even this very sharpness of intellect, which they

gained by such expensive means, subserved no important purpose ; for the highest object at which they seemed to aim, was to envelope every subject which they touched in the dense fogs of metaphysical speculation. Now the true theory of education does not indeed overlook this branch of intellectual culture : the power of accurate discrimination it regards as of vast importance : but it aims at this end by employing the mind upon subjects of practical utility ; subjects which it can turn to some account in the every day business of life. And let me say that it is important not only that the knowledge which is acquired in the course of education, should be, so far as possible, of a practical character, but that the ability should also be gained of reducing it to practice ; of carrying it out in the various departments of human action. You may store the mind of a youth with every variety of learning, and if withall he has not learned to reduce it to practice, he will be only an educated dunce ; whereas a much less degree of knowledge with the ability of applying it, will render him at once respectable and useful.

I may be permitted here, in passing, to advert for a moment to the opposite views which prevail, at the present day, in respect to the study of the Greek and Roman classics. There are those who maintain that all the time which is bestowed on these productions of antiquity is literally wasted, and even worse ; inasmuch as the mind is constantly brought in contact with the corrupt maxims and principles of paganism. There are those, on the other hand, who will have it that, whatever else a man may know, without a knowledge of the ancient classics, he

knows little to purpose ; making them, as it would seem, the beginning and ending, the sum and substance of a good education. Now, is it not more than possible that the proper estimate of this department of study is found between these two extremes ; that that class who would totally exclude them on the one hand, and that class who would make them all in all on the other, have alike fallen into error ? It must be acknowledged that the advantage to be derived from these studies is rather general than particular ; that it consists more in the refinement of the taste and the general culture of the mind, than in any stores of knowledge which admit of being directly applied to the practical objects of life. Nevertheless it cannot be successfully questioned that some of the finest efforts of genius and taste which the world has seen, are embodied in these productions ; that there is a spirit, a beauty, a power, in the originals, which no translation can ever reach ; and that he who would cultivate poetry or eloquence in the highest degree, will look in vain for any finer models of either, out of the Bible. Let the ancient classics then retain a place in the system of education ; but let them be considered as subordinate to other branches of study of a more practical character. And that the student may not draw moral poison out of these classic wells, let the oral instruction which he receives be partly of a monitory kind, and let the morality of paganism often be set in contrast with the morality of the Bible. In this way, while he will be gaining the intellectual benefit which the study of the classics is fitted to yield, he may not only incur no moral disadvantage, but may

actually be acquiring a deeper interest in the precepts and principles of christianity.

4. A system of education, in order to accomplish its legitimate design, *must provide for the healthful exercise of the bodily powers and organs.*

Notwithstanding we know so little of the nature of the connexion between the body and the mind, we know that they exert a powerful influence on each other: we know that the one is at present the organ of the other's operations; and that a vigorous and healthful mind is rarely found in connexion with a diseased and languid body. Hence the great importance of what is very properly denominated *physical education*; for if this be neglected, the body becomes enervated; the mind, however vigorous it may naturally be, sympathises in its weakness; and the effect of the whole is, that the power of action is, in a great measure, paralyzed.

I am aware that so much has been said and written on this subject of late years, that any hints which I can suggest may appear trite; but I also know that any outline of a system of education of which this should not be a part, would be altogether deficient: and moreover it may reasonably admit of question whether there is not far too little responsibility felt on this subject, even by many who conduct our literary institutions. Admitting even that the only object of education were the culture of the mind, if a proper attention to the body be necessary to secure this object, or to secure it in the highest degree, such attention undoubtedly constitutes an appropriate part of the duty of those to whom the business of education is entrusted. Nor is this a

matter which may safely be left to a youth's own discretion ; nor can it be fairly presumed that the buoyancy of youthful spirits will secure that amount of exercise that is necessary to the healthful action of all the bodily organs : for experience proves that many young persons at least are not only sadly negligent in relation to this matter, but they submit more reluctantly to precepts, and even to authority, on this subject, than any other. I say then, it is desirable, nay it is absolutely essential, to the attainment of the grand object of education, that systematic measures should be adopted for invigorating the bodily powers ; that it should not be left to the pleasure of the student whether to fall in with such a course or not ; but that it should be required of him by the same authority which summons him to his daily recitation. It were desirable that such should be the economy of every institution for the education of youth, that each student connected with it should be brought under the eye of his instructors in relation to this matter ; and that he should feel as responsible to them for the discharge of this as of any other part of his duty. For while, as I have already intimated, a vigorous state of the body is essential to the most rapid and successful improvement of the intellect, it is also to be borne in mind that a habit of inattention to this subject, as it is fraught with most disastrous consequences, so, when once established, it is very rarely broken up ; and even when it is, its consequences are not unfrequently visited upon the constitution in a wreck of some of its finest powers.



The object of which I here speak, viz. a vigorous and healthful state of the body, is to be attained chiefly by due attention to *diet*, *rest*, and *exercise*.

In respect to the first of these, viz. *diet*, one important thing to be observed is, that it should be simple. Any thing which is the opposite of this, as it is contrary to nature, has a tendency ultimately to impair the animal functions. And as the food should be simple in its nature, so it should be received in moderate quantities; in quantities accommodated to the digestive power of the system. Many a vigorous constitution has been sacrificed to an early habit of luxurious living; and talents which might have blessed the world for half a century, have prematurely gone down to the grave under the stupifying, withering influence of gluttony.

Not less important is it that proper attention should be rendered to the habits of a student in respect to *sleep*. The errors into which students fall on this subject, vary with different constitutional tendencies, and especially with various degrees of application. The indolent student will be in danger of spending so many of his hours in sleep as to exhaust nature, and induce a frequent, if not an habitual lassitude, as unfriendly to the functions of the body as to the operations of the mind. The diligent student, on the other hand, will be in danger of devoting a smaller portion of time to sleep than is necessary to restore the vigor of his faculties from the exhaustion produced by their intense exercise.— Both these extremes should be carefully guarded against; so much time, and only so much, being spent in sleep, as is found best to subserve the vigor

of the animal system ; for though sleep exerts an influence upon the mind, its direct influence is upon the body ; and the mind is affected only from its connexion with the body. And let me say that it is of great importance that the hours which are professedly devoted to sleep should be really so ; that the student, when he lays himself down, should withdraw his mind from his books as much as if he had no interest in them. I have heard it remarked by one of the most distinguished physicians of the present day, that close thought, while the body is in a horizontal posture, is always unfavorable to health ; but be that as it may, it is certain that if the mind be severely occupied by any subject, after one has retired for rest, it not only entirely prevents sleep during the time, but renders the sleep which is afterwards obtained at best partial and interrupted.

Moreover, a student should be trained to a habit of suitable *bodily exercise*. Without this, all other means to preserve health will be to little purpose. These limbs, and nerves, and muscles, were made for action ; and unless they are kept active, not only experience but reason decides, that they can never preserve their native vigor. To imagine that a child bred up in the lap of indulgence, and scarcely allowed in his early years to pass the limits of the nursery, could ever reach all the strength and vigor of which his constitution is susceptible, were as wild as to expect that the mountain oak would be the growth of a hot-bed. There are many employments to which youth are trained, which involve the necessity of an adequate degree of bodily exercise :

such, however, is not the employment of a student ; and hence it becomes necessary that a system of education should involve some distinct provision for the attainment of this end. The exercise of the body, in order to accomplish its purpose, should be universal, vigorous, systematic. It should extend to the whole body, bringing into action every muscle and organ belonging to the system. It should not be like the exercise which a child gets in the cradle when its mother would rock it to sleep, but like that which the hardy yeoman gets in wielding his axe or his spade. It should not be left to the casual control of circumstances, to be performed or neglected as convenience may seem to dictate ; but it should occupy stated periods, and never be omitted but from imperative necessity. Let it be performed in this way, and the student will soon learn, not only that it is an efficient means of promoting comfort, but of redeeming time.

Now all this system of means for the promotion of health, may be, ought to be, so far as possible, brought into operation in every literary institution. It supposes, I know, a great degree of vigilance and attention on the part of instructors and governors ; but the object to be attained is surely of sufficient importance to justify and demand it. It is just occasion for gratulation to the friends both of learning and humanity, that the institutions for the education of youth which are rising into existence at the present day, generally include some systematic provision in relation to this subject ; and if there be any who ought to feel a deeper interest in this matter than others, they are surely those of us, who are



reaping, in this respect, the legitimate fruits of past neglect.

5. A system of education ought to have particular respect to *the moral culture of youth*. Let the intellectual and physical education be conducted with ever so much skill and success, it will subserve no good purpose in the end, at least to the individual, unless there be a corresponding culture of the affections. Mere physical energy might leave a man a brute; and mere intellectual power might leave him a devil. Whether his acquisitions in either of these departments of his nature are to be for good or evil, must be decided chiefly by his moral dispositions.

Moreover, it admits of no question that the culture of the heart has an important bearing upon the improvement of the mind. That state of the affections which religion induces, all experience proves is far more favorable to the vigorous exercise of the intellectual powers than any other. Let the heart of a youth be brought under the commanding influence of christian principle, and it will be the surest pledge of success in any department of mental exertion. It will be a security against the waste of his time and the perversion of his faculties, while it will quicken his faculties to their highest and noblest exercise.

Now it cannot be questioned that where a considerable number of youth are brought together in a public institution, they are placed in circumstances involving powerful temptations; and if left to themselves, are more likely to fall, than in almost any other situation in which they could be placed. What is the secret history of many of our colleges, but a

melancholy comment on the truth of this remark? Who has not seen the youth full of promise and hope, entering a public seminary, gradually lured into the company of the vicious, fighting with his conscience and yielding up his principles, till, at no distant period, he has become a veteran in crime, and finally has sunk under a weight of profligacy and wretchedness into an early grave? And how many parents are there who could read you from the record of their experience a melancholy chapter illustrative of the same truth; who could tell you of children of whom they once dared to hope that they might be the faithful servants of God and their generation—but they sent them to a public seminary, and there their moral principles were assailed, corrupted, ruined; and now these parents are themselves sinking under a heavy burden of blasted hope. And I venture to say, my friends, that every institution which assembles a large number of young men, unless their morals are guarded with, I had almost said, more than parental vigilance, will, to many of them, prove the grave of character, usefulness, and hope. You see, at once, that there must be in such a community left to themselves, the elements of moral ruin—a spirit that worketh death; for here is inexperience, the fire of youthful passion, the powerful influence of example, the dread of being singular, the soft voice of flattery, the barbed arrow of ridicule; every thing that is calculated to wind the cords of depravity strong and close around the youthful heart. I say multitudes have fallen in these circumstances, and it is no wonder: the wonder is rather that so many have stood.

What then can be done to prevent this mighty evil? There must be, in the first place, the most watchful care exercised toward the youth, either by the instructors themselves, or by some responsible persons connected with the institution. There must be a vigilance so active and close as to discover the moral tendencies of each individual, as to detect the embryo of a vicious habit, and to ferret vice out through its most dark and winding retreats. And if there be in such a community one whose moral principles are found to be corrupt, let every effort be made to effect a speedy and thorough reformation; and if, after suitable means have been used, the evil still continue, let the offending member be cut off; for it were better that one member should suffer excision, than that a moral gangrene should be communicated to the whole body. Let a youth of thoroughly corrupt principles and practice remain long in an institution whose members are brought continually in contact with each other, and there is scarcely any degree of fidelity on the part of instructors and guardians that can counteract his malignant influence; and where such an influence has begun to operate, nothing short of an Almighty energy can be expected ordinarily to arrest it.

But the means for preventing this evil on which the principal reliance is to be placed, is frequent and well adapted instruction drawn directly from the Bible. Hitherto, there has been a deficiency on this subject in most of our seminaries of learning, to which no doubt much of the immorality that has existed in them is to be at least indirectly referred; and I must confess that the only hope I have that this evil is soon

to be, in a great measure, removed, is identified with the conviction I cherish that the Bible is soon to hold a more prominent place, both as it respects study and instruction. Not that I would have our seminaries converted into nurseries of religious sectarianism:—far from it—I would never suffer even a good man to pronounce his shibboleth in any of our halls of science—still I would have every instructor of youth standing on the broad ground of Christianity in all its rich and glorious provisions, commend this blessed religion both by precept and example, to the regard of his pupils. I would have him often dwell upon the excellence of christian morality, and the peculiar adaptation of christianity to all the moral wants of man; and I would have at least some one connected with every such institution, who would be able to give suitable directions to an inquiring sinner, and to encourage and assist the youthful christian. I repeat, then, let the Bible have a more commanding place in our systems of education. Let it be the source whence all the principles both of instruction and government shall be derived. And let its divine truths often be brought directly in contact with the understanding and conscience. A seminary conducted on these principles cannot fail to be a fountain of healthful moral influence, and of course, a rich public blessing.

Once more: A system of education, in order to answer the best purpose, *should unite pleasure with improvement.*

Little improvement is to be expected in any thing, unless it be pursued with some degree of alacrity; that which is regarded as drudgery being scarcely

ever productive of much real profit. It becomes, therefore, a matter of great importance that every thing should be done that can be, in each department of education, to render the pursuits of the student agreeable to him.

This should be done in respect to the *physical* part of his education, especially in regard to exercise. Let the exercise he adopts be of a kind to awaken some degree of interest, or curiosity, or even competition; and, so far as possible, let there be some object in view—the more useful the better—beyond the mere action of the bodily organs. Let it not be continued so long as to produce more than a momentary lassitude; and if possible, let it be arrested at the point at which the object, for the time, will be most effectually gained. By this means the repetition of it will become increasingly pleasant, and it will not only be performed but anticipated with alacrity and delight.

In like manner, every effort should be used to render the *intellectual* part of education a source of pleasure. This is to be done by suitable attention on the part of instructors not to task the mind too severely on the one hand, and not to throw out a bait for indolence on the other; by allowing the pupil to advance no more rapidly than he can advance intelligently and thoroughly; by exhibiting the various branches of study to which he attends in their practical bearings and applications; and by encouraging a well directed principle of emulation. Secure the deep interest of a youth in his studies, and you thereby secure his improvement; but if his interest be not secured, your labors, however exemplary, will be to little purpose.



And finally the same object should be kept in view in respect to the *moral* part of education. I know indeed that the carnal mind is enmity against God ; and that it is not to be expected that the heart of every youth should be open as a matter of course to welcome the influence of the gospel. Nevertheless, I do believe that genuine christianity may be presented to the mind of a youth in such a manner as not to disgust, but to attract, him ; not to curdle his blood as if a spectre had risen up before him, but to inspire him with a conviction that religion meets him as a friend, and that she is a good angel sent down from heaven on an errand of love. And that this purpose may be gained, I would have every air of artificial sanctity laid aside ; and I would have religion acted out before him in the every day intercourse of life, in all her power and loveliness ; and though the lessons of morality and piety should be frequent, yet they should never be so long as to form an association in the mind between religion and irksomeness. Let some such method as this be adopted, and I doubt not that the result will be that christianity will gradually interweave itself with the most common thoughts of the mind, and finally gain an influence over it which will render it the power of God unto salvation.

I have now exhibited before you a brief outline of the means necessary to the attainment of the great end of education. And may we not regard it as an indication that a brighter age is opening upon us, that this subject is rapidly gaining in the regards of an enlightened community ; that not only the philosophy of education, but, if I may be allowed the expression, the christianity of it, is occupying both the heads and the hearts of many wise and good men. It deserves

especially to be gratefully noticed, that many of the abuses formerly connected with this subject have already passed away, and that others are yielding to an enlightened public opinion ; and it can scarcely be doubted that the institutions which are hereafter to come into existence, are destined to sustain continually a more and still more elevated character. Be it so. Let our seminaries of learning be nurseries of religion ; and from the altars of religion let the prayer of faith go up for their prosperity and enlargement ; that thus learning and religion may be fellow helpers together for the advancement of the present and eternal interests of men.

My friends, on this auspicious occasion suffer me to congratulate you. Let me congratulate you as the inhabitants of a state, which, though younger than many others, has already attained a strong and vigorous manhood ; as the inhabitants of a village which is not more distinguished by the magnificence of its surrounding scenery, than by its advantages for intellectual and moral culture. I join with you in hearty thanksgivings to God for his goodness to you as a people ; while, as his ambassador, I admonish you to the faithful improvement of your superior privileges. Let this institution especially be sacred to the legitimate ends of education. Let it be in the best sense a christian institution, training and moulding the whole character for eternity. May it stand here in coming centuries, as a monument of an enlightened and well directed public spirit. May it gather increasing glory with each successive age. May it contribute to give you a character stable as your own mountains, majestic as the oaks that wave upon their summits !

## VERMONT CLASSICAL SEMINARY

THIS Institution is situated in Castleton, one of the most beautiful villages of New-England, fourteen miles east of Whitehall, or the head of Lake Champlain, and on the great stage road from Albany to Montreal.

The building erected for the purpose, stands on an eminence south of the village, and commands an extensive view of a rich and beautiful country. It is 160 feet in length, and 40 in breadth, with projections in the centre and ends of 46 and 55 feet, and is three stories high, exclusive of a basement. The basement contains a large dining hall, kitchens, wash-rooms, domestics' rooms, &c. In the second story are professors' rooms, a laboratory, chapel, a public school room, four private recitation rooms, a library and business room. The two upper stories contain instructors' rooms, and fifty dormitories, about 13 feet square, exclusive of a closet; which are provided with stoves, beds, tables, desks, chairs, &c. To the building is attached a play-ground of about six acres, a part of which is to be devoted to a garden.

The course of instruction in this institution will be arranged under five divisions, to wit:

1. CHEMISTRY AND NATURAL HISTORY.
2. MATHEMATICS AND NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.
3. ANCIENT LANGUAGES.
4. MODERN LANGUAGES.
5. ENGLISH LITERATURE.

Each of these divisions will be under the charge of competent instructors. Where the course of study is left discretionary with the superintendents, they will prescribe that, which, in their opinion, is best calculated to render the pupil an accomplished scholar; but a parent or guardian may select any particular branches, to which the attention of the pupil will be exclusively directed.

Chemistry, Natural History, and Natural Philosophy, will be taught by lectures and recitations. During appointed hours of the day, the other studies will be pursued in a school-room, under the eye of a teacher. The exercises of each day will open from 5 to 7 o'clock A. M. (varying with the season,) with prayer by the chaplain of the seminary; and there will be from two to three recitations during the day.

The recreations of the pupils will consist, in the summer, in collecting specimens in botany, mineralogy, &c.; during the winter, exercises of various kinds will be conducted in the large hall in the seminary.—A certain number of the more advanced students will, in rotation, act as assistants in the lectures on Chemistry, Natural Philosophy, Botany, &c.

On the Sabbath, all the students will be required to attend Church, or the religious exercises of the chaplain in the chapel. Recitations will also be had upon Ecclesiastical History, Evidences of Christianity, &c. The greatest attention will at all times be paid to the moral deportment of the youth who may be placed in this institution. They will in no case be permitted to leave the grounds attached to it, without permission.

There will be two vacations; one from the third Wednesday in April, of three weeks; and one from the second Wednesday of August, of five weeks.

Terms, \$200 a year, including tuition, board, room, furniture, washing, mending, firewood, lights, &c. payable semi-annually in advance. No student to be admitted for less than a year.









